

B1
Cont

(Application No. 09/369,231)

the valley surfaces having gnarled nodes protruding therefrom; and
said gnarled nodes having a protruding length and being substantially devoid of
fibrils along the protruding length.

17 10. (twice amended) A material comprising:

expanded PTFE having a node and fibril microstructure;

at least one node having a protruding length measured from a valley surface, the at
least one node being substantially devoid of fibrils along its protruding length;

the at least one node being adjacent to a ridge having a height; and

the protruding length of the node being greater than the height of the adjacent ridge.

BA

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

REMARKS

In the Office Action of April 23, 2002, each of the pending claims is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by one or both of two published papers. As is explained below, each of these papers is directed to structures that are markedly different from the present invention as claimed. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of all of the pending claims in the present application are respectfully requested.

The Present Invention as Defined in the Amended Claimed Is Both New and Nonobvious Over All of the References of Record

The pending claims have all been rejected as anticipated by two articles: Niino et al., "Surface modification of poly(tetrafluoroethylene) by excimer laser processing: enhanced adhesion," 109 Applied Surface Science 110 (1997) (hereafter "Niino et al."); and Kuper et al., "Ablation of polytetrafluoroethylene (Teflon) with femtosecond UV excimer laser pulses," 54 Appl. Phys. Lett. 4 (1989) (hereafter "Kuper et al."). In the current Office Action it is asserted that:

Claims 1-7, 10, and 12-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Niino et al. ... or Kuper et al. The prior art discloses the laser treatment for surface modification of Teflon. Since Applicant is using the same approach to modify the Teflon surface, it is the examiner's position that the claimed